Implementation of Uruguay Round Agreement

2167. SHRI S.M. KRISHNA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the concerns relating to the implementation of "Uruguay Round Agreement" and the imbalances and asymmetries in these agreements have been enumerated to the General Council;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government have taken up the matter with consultative groups; and

(d) if so, with what results?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI RAMAKRISHNA HEDGE): (a) and (b) At the recently concluded Geneva Ministerial Conference (18—20 May'98) of WTO Trade Ministers, Commerce Minister in his statement, drew the attention of WTO Mfembers to the lack of symmetry of concessions as regards developed and developing countries in the WTO agreements as also in their manner of implementation, which has made trade liberalisation commercially less meaningful for the developing world. India's main emphasis was on the difficulties in the implementation of the WTO agreement due to these factors.

(c) These matters featured prominently in the multilateral consultations between Trade Ministers, as also during the sessions held with like-minded trading partners such as the SAARC group. They were also taken up in bilateral discussions with our major trading partners.

(d) The Conference, through the final Ministerial Declaration has endorsed India's view that existing Agreements arising out of the Uruguay Round should be effectively implemented so as to ensure that the benefits of the multilateral trading system flow to all countries, especially developing countries like India. The Conference has also agreed on the need, stressed by India and other developing countries, for effective implementation of the provisions of the Uruguay Round Agreement relating to special and differential treatment in favour of developing countries.

Direct Access to Foreign Tobacco Buyer

2168. SHRI SOLIPETA RAMACHANDRA REDDY: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether a farmer's delegation from Andhra Pradesh has urged for direct access to foreign tobacco buyers; and

(b) if so, the reaction of Government thereto keeping in view the plight of the farmers?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI RAMAKRISHNA HEDGE); (a) Yes, Sir. Some representatives of growers have suggested permitting international merchants to participate in the auctions conducted by the Tobacco Board to create competition and to augment the exports.

(b) Under the new Industrial Policy, trading companies involved in exports are permitted foreign equity subject to dividend balancing. So far, no new international tobacco trading company has approached the Tobacco Board to permit participation in purchases at the Tobacco Board's auction platforms.

Export of Spices

2169. SHRI SOLIPETA RAMACHANDRA REDDY: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether exports in spices industry registered an increase by 10% in value terms in 1997-98;

(b) whether Government propose to give a major boost to exporters of spcies by granting more incentives;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the action taken on the demand of exporters to remove cess devised by the Spices Board?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI RAMAKRISHNA HEGDE): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) Apart from the general trade policy reforms, some of the steps taken to enhance exports of spices include abolitin of cess on export of pepper (except green pepper in brine), cardamom, saffron and spice oils and oleore-sins to make them price competitive in the overseas markets; implementation of
rand promotion schemes like "Logo Promotion"; grant of "Spice House Certificate" as a recognition of processer/ exporter of quality products; setting up of laboratories for testing of products to ensure quality; technology transfer; process upgradation and product development.

(d) Review of taxation burden on exports, including cess, is an ongoing process and as and when considered necessary, exemptions on specified items of spices are notified with a view to make our exports more competitive in the international market. Cess on export of pepper (except green pepper in brine), cardamom, saffron and spice oils and oleoresins has been exemtped.

खुला सामान्य लाइसेंस (ओ जी एल) योजना के अन्तर्गत तिलहन का आयात

2170. **श्री बरजिन्दर सिंह :**
श्री सुखदेव सिंह ढिंडसा :

क्या वाणिज्य मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि :

(क) क्या यह सच हैं कि देश में तिलहन की कमी को दूर करने के लिए अनेक संस्थान में केन्द्र सरकार से तिलहन-बीजों को खुला सामान्य लाइसेंस (ओं. जी. एल) योजना के अन्तर्गत आयात करने की छूट देने की मांग की हैं,

(ख) यदि हां, तो यह मांग किन-किन संस्थानों द्वारा कब की गई थी,

(ग) क्या सरकार ने इस मांग पर विचार करने के पश्चात् इसे स्वीकार करने का कोई निर्णय भी लिया हैं, और

(घ) यदि हां, तो तत्संबंधी विस्तृत ब्यौरा क्या हैं ?

वाणिज्य मंत्री (श्री रामकृष्ण हेगड़े) : (क) और (ख) सोयाबीन प्रोसेसर्स एसोसिएशन आफ इंडिया (सोपा), दि सॉल्वेंट एक्सट्रेक्टर्स एसोसिएशन आफ इंडिया (एसईए) और भारतीय वाणिज्य एवं उद्योग मंडल परिसंघ (फिक्की) ने सोयाबीन बीजों एवं अन्य तेल-बीजों के आयात की अनुमति देने का प्रस्ताव किया था।

(ग) और (घ) कुछेक शर्तों और प्रक्रियागत अपेक्षाओं के अधीन रहते हुए घरेलू उपलब्धता में वृद्धि करने के निमित सीमित मात्रा में सोयाबीन के आयात की अनुमति देने से संबंधित एक प्रस्ताव पर इस समय विचार किया जा रहा हैं।

रबड़ की मांग और पूर्ति

2171. **डा. रणबीर सिंह :**
श्री रामनाथ कोविन्द :
श्री राजनाथ सिंह "सूर्य" :

क्या वाणिज्य मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि :

(क) क्या यह सच हैं कि प्राकृतिक और सिन्थेटिक रबड़ दोनों की मांग और पूर्ति के बीच हर वर्ष अन्तर बढ़ता जा रहा हैं,

(ख) यदि हां, तो इसके क्या कारण हैं, और

(ग) सरकार ने इस अंतर को दूर करने के लिए क्या कदम उठाये हैं ?

वाणिज्य मंत्री (श्री रामकृष्ण हेगड़े) : (क) प्राकृतिक रबड़ के उत्पादन और खपत के बीच अंतर